
Abstract

Methods for detecting nucleic acids that do not require incorporation of labeled nucleotides into the hybridized strand of either the target or the probe nucleic acid. A nucleic acid is detected by adding a capture sequence onto the end of the single stranded probe or target and then hybridizing that capture sequence to a complementary sequence on a signal carrying molecule. Alternatively, a nucleic acid is detected by using an existing sequence on one of the two unlabeled single strands as the capture sequence, and then hybridizing that sequence to a complementary sequence of a signal carrying molecule. In preferred embodiments, the signal carrying molecule is a dendrimer.